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2014 Ram 1500 EcoDiesel Long-Term Road Test

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2014 Ram 1500 Ecodiesel: Back in Service

March 3, 2015



Our [2014 Ram 1500 Ecodiesel](#) is back in our hands after an extended stay at McPeck's Dodge of Anaheim, the dealership that was closest to the point at which it [stalled abruptly](#).

And by "extended stay" I mean 12 days.

Why so long? The Ram engineering group in Detroit got involved. But not because I asked them to — I didn't. Maybe someone who knew someone saw the Tweet I'd sent out while I was waiting for the tow truck. Perhaps the problem description raised a red flag.

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As well it should. A stall while moving is a rare yet serious failure mode. I'm told they wanted to fully understand the circumstances in order to determine the root cause.

My contact inside the company assures me this was not special journalist treatment, and I tend to agree. Twelve days without a truck does not feel like the red carpet treatment, even if the dealer did offer a loaner. If making us happy and downplaying were the main objectives they would have swapped-out the part in question and turned it around as soon as possible.

Since they didn't do that I can only assume they were truly not certain of the precise failure mode, couldn't guess what single part was to blame. The work ticket, the painstaking pace of the work and the involvement of Ram engineering's district service representative reflects that.

The work ticket also lists the original trouble codes as P0087 and P016F, which have to do with low fuel rail pressure. (Two fuel rails sit underhood and feed three fuel injectors each). The mechanic and the district service rep didn't suffer a stall during their test drives, but they did experience the long crank and observed sluggish response under heavy acceleration, a symptom I hadn't experienced because I hadn't been hauling cargo or hauling butt in the days leading up to the stall.



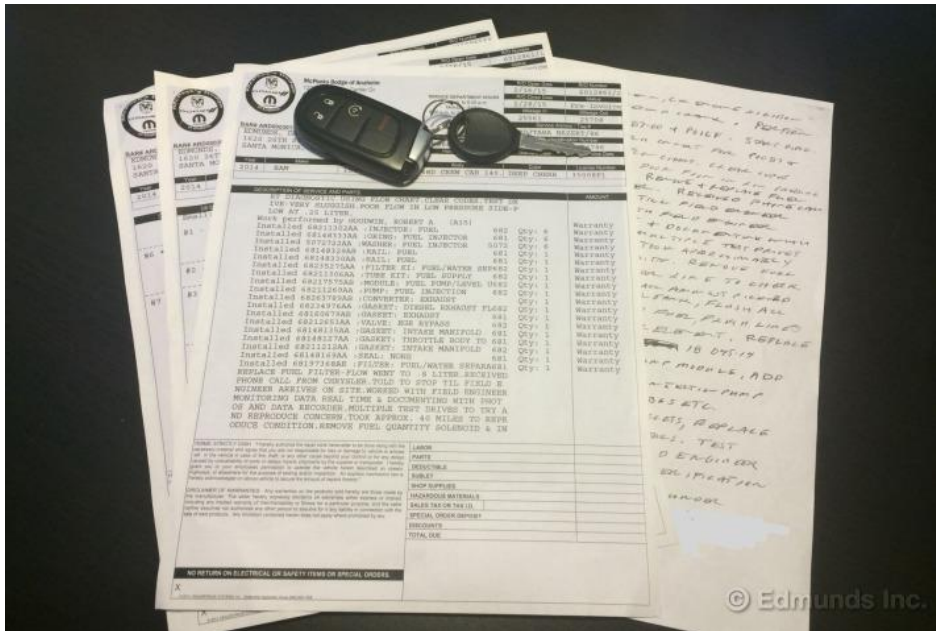
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the bottom of the tank.

Think of the canister as a bucket. When the tank is full the canister is naturally filled with fuel because it's submerged. But it stays full even as the tank level drops below the lip of the bucket because a) the fuel return line dumps into the canister and b) the pump draws fuel in through a tiny orifice in the bottom. In this way the pump, which is inside the canister, is always bathed in fuel even if the tank level outside drops lower than the lip of the bucket.

They ruled out the possibility of contaminants in the tank or the fuel after they drained and inspected the tank. They also ruled out canister damage from external sources such as a piece of freeway debris or a direct off-road rock hit after their inspection showed no witness marks or dents in the tank.

At this point the specific reason for the low rail pressure and source (and extent) of the debris in the high-pressure part of the fuel system remained unknown. They had theories, but testing them would take time.



So they decided to remove and inspect the entire fuel system from the in-tank canister and its submerged feeder pump to the injector pump to the fuel rails and the injectors themselves. That's pretty much the entire fuel system downstream of the tank itself, except for the fuel lines along the frame rails, which can be flushed and cleaned.

The inspection — more of a dissection, really — would occur in Detroit, so they ordered a laundry list of new replacement parts for our truck, all under warranty. Waiting for the parts to arrive from their various warehouses took most of the time. Many of the pieces are not regular service items that are normally stocked at the local depot.

While they were at it we had them attend to the [rubbing inner fender liner](#). Our truck's early build-date corresponds to a TSB that has to do with the SCR catalyst, so they performed that service, too.

Now that it's back, everything appears normal and the truck runs great. It makes good power and torque, and the fuel economy seems to be right where it should be. It's worth noting that the 3.0-liter V6 turbodiesel engine itself was never implicated. Its injector rails and fuel injectors were replaced only because of their proximity to where the debris was found, but neither is considered to be the source.

I'm told I'll hear more once the parts are analyzed. For now our 2014 Ram 1500 is back in the mix feeling as capable as ever. I'm still confident in the truck, and the scale of their response makes me think this is NOT a

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